

1.0 Percent Participation Justification Form 2018–19

The *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* requires each district and charter school to complete and submit a justification when it anticipates exceeding 1.0 percent of students assessed in a subject area (i.e., English Language Arts/Reading, Mathematics, and/or Science) with the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment. Justifications from each district and charter school will be reviewed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), and follow up actions will be determined based on the information found in the justification document. Staff from the Exceptional Children and Accountability Divisions in each district and charter school should collaborate to provide the following information on the justification document. Responses to Sections 1–4 and the designated signatures are required; it is optional to include additional information (see page 5). This justification document will be publicly posted. As such, the document **must not contain any personally identifiable information**. If necessary, additional pages may be attached to this form.

Section 1: Contact Information

Enter contact information for the primary district/charter school staff member responsible for overseeing the completion of the justification form.

3-Digit LEA/Charter Code: 590
Contact Name: Greg Hughes
Contact Phone No.: 828-652-4535, ext. 110
District/Charter Name: McDowell
Contact Title: Director of Research and Accountability
Contact E-Mail: greg.hughes@mcdowell.k12.nc.us

Section 2: Analyzing Contributing Factors

Did the Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams utilize the alternate assessment eligibility criteria and the North Carolina Alternate Assessment Decision Making Flow Chart to make alternate assessment participation decisions?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Indicate how all members of the IEP teams have been informed or trained on the alternate assessment eligibility criteria and the North Carolina Alternate Assessment Decision Making Flow Chart. Check all that apply.

Training Method	School Administration	Special Education Staff	Parents	Related Service Staff
Face-to-face training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Given copy of guidance documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No training provided	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please explain below	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Other, please explain below:

We have our own decision making chart that we have used for several years, but are now going to include the North Carolina Alternate Assessment Decision Making Flow Chart in all future trainings and IEP meetings.

Does the district or charter school identify students to participate in the alternate assessment that do not traditionally participate (i.e., Speech and Language Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, etc.)? If yes, please explain how the district determined these students meet the criteria for participation in the alternate assessment.

☐ Yes

☒ No

Explain below:

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are identified as eligible for alternative assessments based on evaluations completed by licensed professionals that include intellectual, adaptive behavior and educational assessments as well as health screenings, related service screenings, interventions, observations and a review of existing data. To be eligible for alternative testing, a student must be found eligible within one or more of the existing categories of disability under the IDEA (e.g., autism, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, etc.) The student's cognitive impairments prevents them from attaining grade-level achievement standards, even with the very best instruction. The student's disability must significantly impact their adaptive behaviors. The student must require extensive and repeated individualized instruction and support to make meaningful gains and require substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways. These students must be instructed using the North Carolina Extended Content Standards in all assessed content areas. Prior to placing a student on the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment, MCS requires schools to complete a planning worksheet to ensure the extended content standards provide the least restrictive environment for our students. Items on the planning form include post-secondary goals, high school diploma pathway, and curriculum, continuum of services, state assessments, and areas of concern, current assessments, and review of programmatic issues, compelling questions and a support analysis. To proceed with extended content placement, the placement must be approved by the EC director and carefully addressed through the IEP team. Parents are contacted and presented with and given a statement of understanding prior to placing students on the NCEXTEND1. MCS is disproportionate in 8th grade (3.6%) due to holding students at the middle school an additional year to prevent them from attending high school for more than 5 years. This allows a more equivalent time spent at each school level.

Does the district or charter school provide a targeted program that may contribute to a higher enrollment of students with significant cognitive disabilities?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Explain below:

Our program doesn't contribute to higher enrollment of students with significant cognitive disabilities, but specially designed instruction for intellectually disabled students is provided.

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Does the district or charter school have a small overall student population that increased the likelihood of exceeding the 1.0 percent threshold?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Explain below:

We do not have a small student population that increases the likelihood of exceeding the 1% threshold.
(6300 students, + or -)

Section 3: Assurances

Does the district or charter school have a process in place to monitor alternate assessment participation?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain below:

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are identified as eligible for alternative assessments based on evaluations completed by licensed professionals that include intellectual, adaptive behavior and educational assessments as well as health screenings, related service screenings, interventions, observations and a review of existing data. To be eligible for alternative testing, a student must be found eligible within one or more of the existing categories of disability under the IDEA (e.g., autism, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, etc.) The student's cognitive impairments prevent them from attaining grade-level achievement standards, even with the very best instruction. The student's disability must significantly impact their adaptive behaviors. The student must require extensive and repeated individualized instruction and support to make meaningful gains and require substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways. These students must be instructed using the North Carolina Extended Content Standards in all assessed content areas. Prior to placing a student on the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment, MCS requires schools to complete a planning worksheet to ensure the extended content standards provide the least restrictive environment for our students. Items on the planning form include; post-secondary goals, high school diploma pathway, continuum of services, state assessments, areas of concern, current assessments, compelling questions, and a support analysis. To proceed with extended content placement, the placement must be approved by the EC director and carefully addressed through the IEP team. Parents are contacted and given a statement of understanding prior to placing students on the NCEXTEND1.

Does the district or charter school have a process in place to identify and address disproportionality in alternate assessment participation (specifically, among race, gender, or socioeconomic status groups)?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain below:

In McDowell County Schools, disproportionality of students with disabilities is defined as an overrepresentation of 4% or more than the typically developing student population. McDowell County Schools is made up of 85% white students. Approximately 89% of students tested on the NCEXTEND1

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are white and therefore not considered disproportionate. Other ethnic groups consisted of 4 students making up 10% of the students participating in the NCEXTEND1. The students testing in McDowell County are made up of 47% female and 53% male. Of the students taking NCEXTEND1, 25% are female and 75% are male. This is considered disproportionate. Of all students with autism tested, 30% are female and 70% are male, which closely matches the national statistics that show 4 out of 5 students identified with autism are male. Disproportionality is addressed through a review of records every 1-3 years to determine the appropriateness of the placement based on the afore mentioned criteria. When making placement decisions, MCS ensures that a psychologist or a program specialist is in attendance to present an unbiased view of the data. Psychologists are careful to consider all appropriate areas of eligibility. Internal audits are performed biannually and student identification is reviewed.

Section 4: Resources and Technical Assistance

What resources and technical assistance does the district or charter school need from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to ensure that students are being assessed using the appropriate assessment?

We look at a lot of things when placing students in the Extend 1 test. If we need something to enhance student learning, we purchase it. Our biggest needs are on the personnel side, where we could desparately use another psychologist. Additionally, we could use effective training for school administrators to help clarify the criteria for students that need the Extended Content Standards so that appropriate placements can be supported.

Signatures

Superintendent/Charter School Director		Date	5/2/2019
Exceptional Children Director/Coordinator		Date	5/2/2019
LEA/Charter School Test Coordinator		Date	5/2/19

The completed justification form must be signed by the superintendent/charter school director, exceptional children's director/coordinator, and LEA/charter school testing coordinator. The form must be scanned and emailed to alternatesassessment@dpi.nc.gov by May 3, 2019.

The NCDPI will notify districts/charter schools in writing if further information is needed and will include next steps. For questions, please contact your Exceptional Children Director or Regional Accountability Coordinator.

Note: See page 5 for additional information that can be included but is not required.